



(U) Is NSA Correctly Postured Against the Most Critical Missions?

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(S//SI) One of the main duties of SID leadership is to decide how best to allocate our finite resources to maximum effect. Since our resources are limited, it often amounts to a "zero-sum" situation, where giving resources to one mission means taking resources from another. So how do we allocate our internal resources so that we focus on the highest priority areas, while acknowledging that we are not able to cover other areas to the same level? -- By basing these decisions on a prioritized **SIGINT Mission List**, which identifies the "must do" targets within each mission. This list is reviewed monthly by the SID Leadership Team and can be adjusted as our national priorities change, thus implementing the corporate strategic goal of making the USSS more agile.

(S) In reviewing the list, SID leadership gathers input on community requirements from the SIGINT National Intelligence Officers (SINIOs); the Issue Management Teams (IMTs) provide input on our SIGINT capabilities. After the Mission List is discussed, reviewed and approved by the SID Leadership Team, it is provided to DIRNSA for his review and signature, producing a final version of the list. This forms a key element of SID's Governance Responsibility #1 "Discern the SIGINT Missions."

(S) The Mission List represents NSA's contract with our customers for delivering SIGINT efforts against our most critical targets. While the SIGINT Mission List is still a "work in progress" we believe it is now ready to roll out to the NSA workforce, SIGINT partners and customers.

What is the primary function of the SIGINT Strategic Mission List and how does this list fit into national and SIGINT requirement processes?

(S//SI) The SIGINT Strategic Mission List represents the intent of the NSA Director in regard to mission priorities and acceptable risks for the SIGINT Enterprise over the next 12-18 months. (By "risk", we mean the chance that some significant event or development will occur in a target area we've deemed to be of lower priority.) We derive the Mission List from the Intelligence Community National Intelligence Priorities Framework, DNI Guidance, the Strategic Warning List and other strategic planning documents.

What Missions are included on the SIGINT Strategic Mission List?

(S//SI) The SIGINT Strategic Mission List includes 15 critical missions, listed in priority order: [mission list](#).

How are Enduring Targets treated on the Strategic Mission List?

(S//SI) In addition to the 15 critical functional missions, the Strategic Mission List also includes 5 enduring targets (countries) that are included due to their strategic importance. These missions are regarded as "trump cards" which at any given time can compete with the highest priority thematic missions on the list. Elements of these targets also overlap with the thematic target sets. The current set of enduring targets on the Mission List includes: China, North Korea, Iraq, Iran and Russia. The enduring targets are also reviewed and can be added or deleted as requirements change.

What is included in each Mission?

(S//SI) For each of the 15 critical missions and each of the 5 Enduring Targets, the list includes:

1. Focus Areas - -highest priority targets against which the SIGINT enterprise is placing emphasis or focus. These are the "must do" targets for that mission.

2. Accepted Risks-- targets for which the SIGINT Enterprise is not providing optimal coverage and therefore some risk is being taken for that mission.

The list is not intended to be all encompassing, but is intended to set forth guidance on highest priorities. Many targets are still worked within each mission despite not being listed as Focus Areas.

Rolling Out the Strategic Mission List to the Global SIGINT Enterprise

(S//SI) Using the Worldwide VTC as a forum, we have begun to roll out the Mission Discernment process and the Strategic Mission List to NSA/CSS Regional Centers and field sites. We have asked them to start thinking about where they see themselves in the Strategic Mission List, where they place the most emphasis, what impact the list has had on their processes, etc. We have also provided the list to NCRs and CSGs and -- with the April version of the list -- will be asking our senior representatives to share the list directly with our customers. This will provide a new level of transparency as to what we are able to do well and where we are taking some risks - good for us and good for our customers.

(S) The following chart depicts the Mission Discernment process: [process diagram](#).

(U//FOUO) To learn more about Mission Discernment or to access a copy of the current version of the SIGINT Strategic Mission visit the [Mission Discernment homepage](#) on Web World ("go mission discernment") For additional information on the list contact the Strategic Intelligence Issues Office and SINIO Council, 963-2228.

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